

THE MORTAL

WOP

MARVEL

5

LGY#791

RATED T+



EWING
FERRY
MILLA

**“AND WHAT IS MORE,” CONTINUED THRIDI,
“HE HATH MADE MAN, AND GIVEN HIM A
SOUL WHICH SHALL LIVE AND NEVER PERISH
THOUGH THE BODY SHALL HAVE MOULDERED
AWAY, OR HAVE BEEN BURNT TO ASHES.”**

**- FROM “ON THE SUPREME DEITY,”
THE YOUNGER EDDAS OF SNORRI STURLESON**



Would you
know more?

Another tale of Asgard
then, though this one is
told and told again.
Once upon a time...

...the Thunder God grew
headstrong, arrogant
and aggressive. And so
his father Odin devised
a **lesson** for him.

THOUGH THOU
ART SUPREME IN
THY POWER AND THY
PRIDE...THOU MUST
KNOW **WEAKNESS**...
THOU MUST
FEEL PAIN!

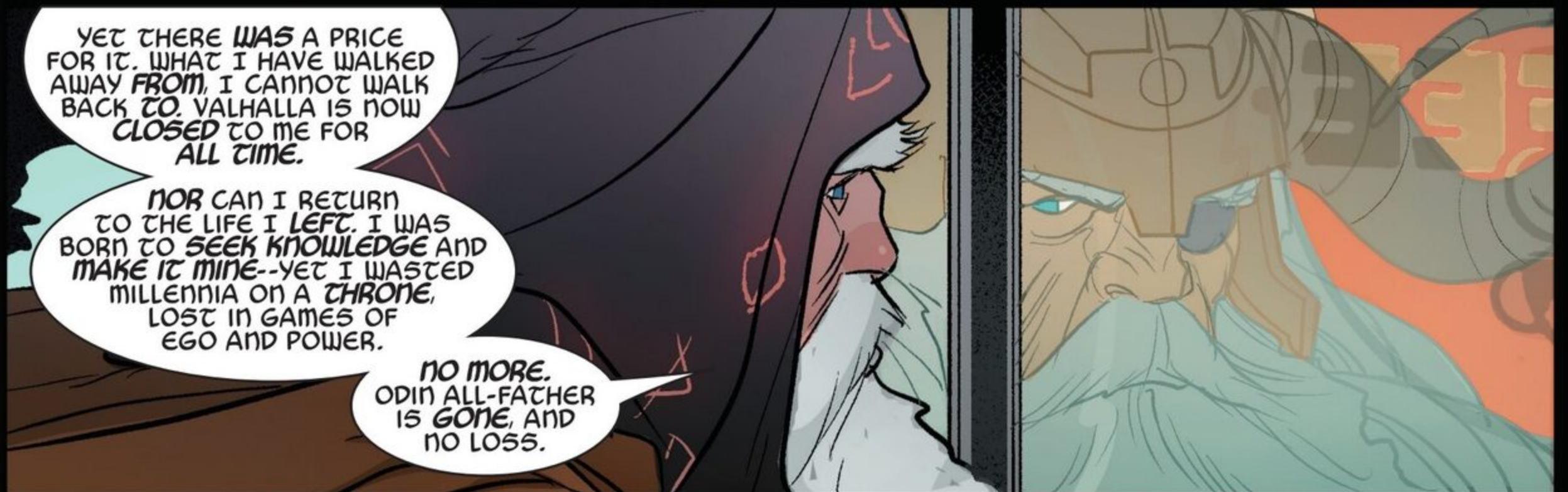
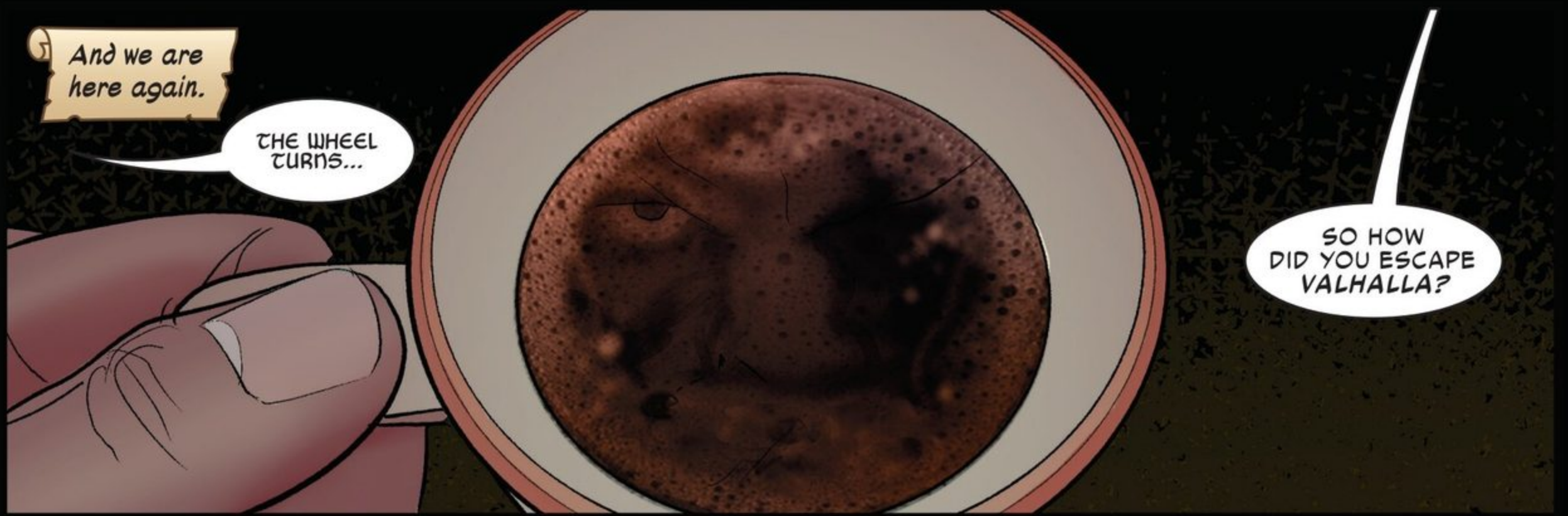
NO LONGER
ART THOU GOD
OF THUNDER! NOR
SHALL MJOLNIR
SERVE THEE
NOW!

THY MEMORY
TOO SHALL I STRIP
BARE! A NEW LIFE
AWAITS THEE!

GO!

The lesson was a **human**
soul, created to be the
Thunder God's other self.

And the lesson was
named **Donald Blake**.





SARCASM.

BECAUSE
LUCK **CANNOT** BE
TRUSTED. BECAUSE
LUCK **CANNOT** BE
CONTROLLED.

YOU ARE
AFRAID OF WHAT
YOU **CANNOT** CONTROL,
SO YOU TRY TO CONTROL
ALL YOU CAN. IN **THIS**,
YOU DO NOT
CHANGE.



AND SO
YOU MADE A
SACRIFICE OF
my SON...



JUDGE-MENT.



NO, IT'S--IT'S NOT ABOUT
CONTROL. I HAVE TO BE
FREE--AND I'M NOT FREE
UNLESS **EVERYONE'S**
FREE.

I'M FIGHTING
TO SAVE
EVERYTHING.



WOULD YOU GO
BACK TO WHAT YOU
WERE? STUNTED?
CAGED?

FROZEN IN
AN OLD IDEA
OF YOURSELF
LIKE A **BLOCK**
OF ICE?



I'D **PREFER**
DEATH TO THAT.
SO WOULD YOU.
SO WOULD
THOR.

TRUST
ME.



"SIGURD WAS ATTACKED BY ASSASSINS--THE SONS OF THE SERPENT. THEY CORNERED HIM ON THE HIGH STEEL--

"--AND UP THERE, IT WAS HIM OR THEM...

"...THOUGH THE POLICE MAY NOT SEE IT THAT WAY."



BUT WHO SENT THE ASSASSINS? WHO IS THE FATHER SERPENT? YOU SAY YOU'RE A SEEKER OF KNOWLEDGE IN THIS LIFE, ODIN--HAVE YOU THAT KNOWLEDGE?

I DO. THE SERPENT HAS A NAME--DONALD BLAKE, WHO WAS YOUR CREATION--

LIAR YOU ARE, LOKI. EVEN IN THIS ASPECT.



A LIE OF OMISSION--THE MOST CRAVEN LIE OF ALL. I MADE BLAKE TO REMIND THOR OF HUMANITY, NOT TO BE A GOD HIMSELF.



THAT WAS A MISCHIEF YOU FORCED UPON HIM TO WORK YOUR MAGIC--AND TO ESCAPE YOUR OWN BURDENS.

IF HE MAKES TROUBLE FOR YOU NOW--OR FOR JARLSON--



--IT IS YOUR OWN HAND BEHIND IT.





I DIDN'T KNOW BLAKE HAD GOTTEN LOOSE. I DIDN'T KNOW HE WAS HERE.

WHAT I'VE BEGUN...YOU'RE RIGHT. IT'S TOO COMPLEX A WORKING. TOO MESSY.

I CAN'T GET SIGURD OUT OF THIS.



I CAN PUSH, HERE AND THERE-- EASE THE WAY. BUT TOO MUCH WOULD UNBALANCE EVERYTHING.

EVEN THE PAPERS I MADE FOR HIM SO HE COULD GET WORK, THE CERTIFICATES... THEY'RE NOT PERFECT. IF THE POLICE LOOK TOO CLOSELY...



CAN YOU HELP?
CAN YOU FREE HIM?



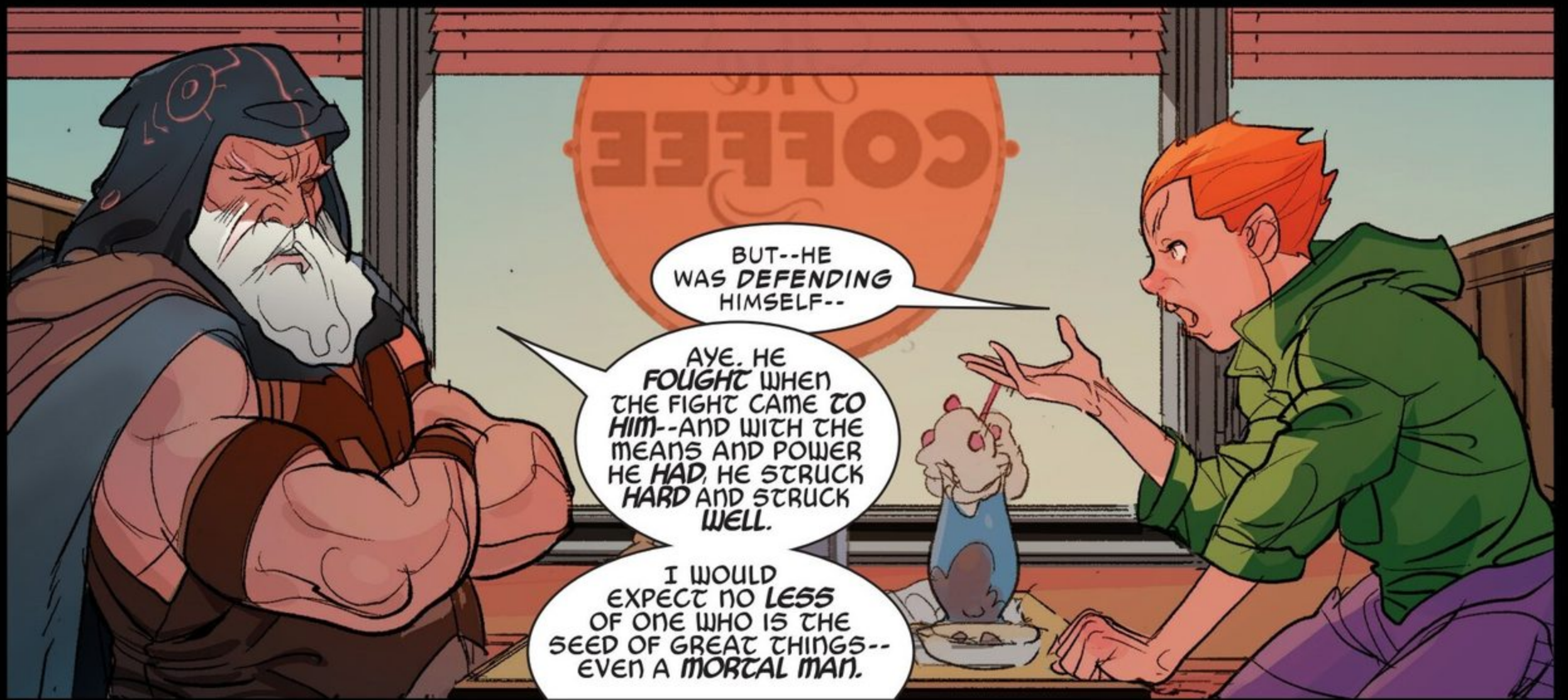
IF MEN PLACE BONDS ON MY LIMBS, I SO SING THAT I CAN WALK; THE FETTER STARTS FROM MY FEET, AND THE MANACLE FROM MY HANDS.



...
WILL YOU...?



BRAAWK!
JUDGE-MENT.



BUT--HE WAS **DEFENDING** HIMSELF--

AYE. HE **FOUGHT** WHEN THE FIGHT CAME TO **HIM**--AND WITH THE MEANS AND POWER HE **HAD**, HE STRUCK **HARD** AND STRUCK **WELL**.

I WOULD EXPECT NO **LESS** OF ONE WHO IS THE SEED OF GREAT THINGS--EVEN A **MORTAL** MAN.



BUT THEN HE SOUGHT A **NEW** FIGHT. HE SOUGHT **VENGEANCE** FOR THE SLIGHTS COMMITTED AGAINST HIM--AND NOT EVEN AGAINST **HIM**.

IT WAS MY **SON'S** NAME TAKEN IN **VAIN** THAT DROVE HIM TO VIOLENCE.

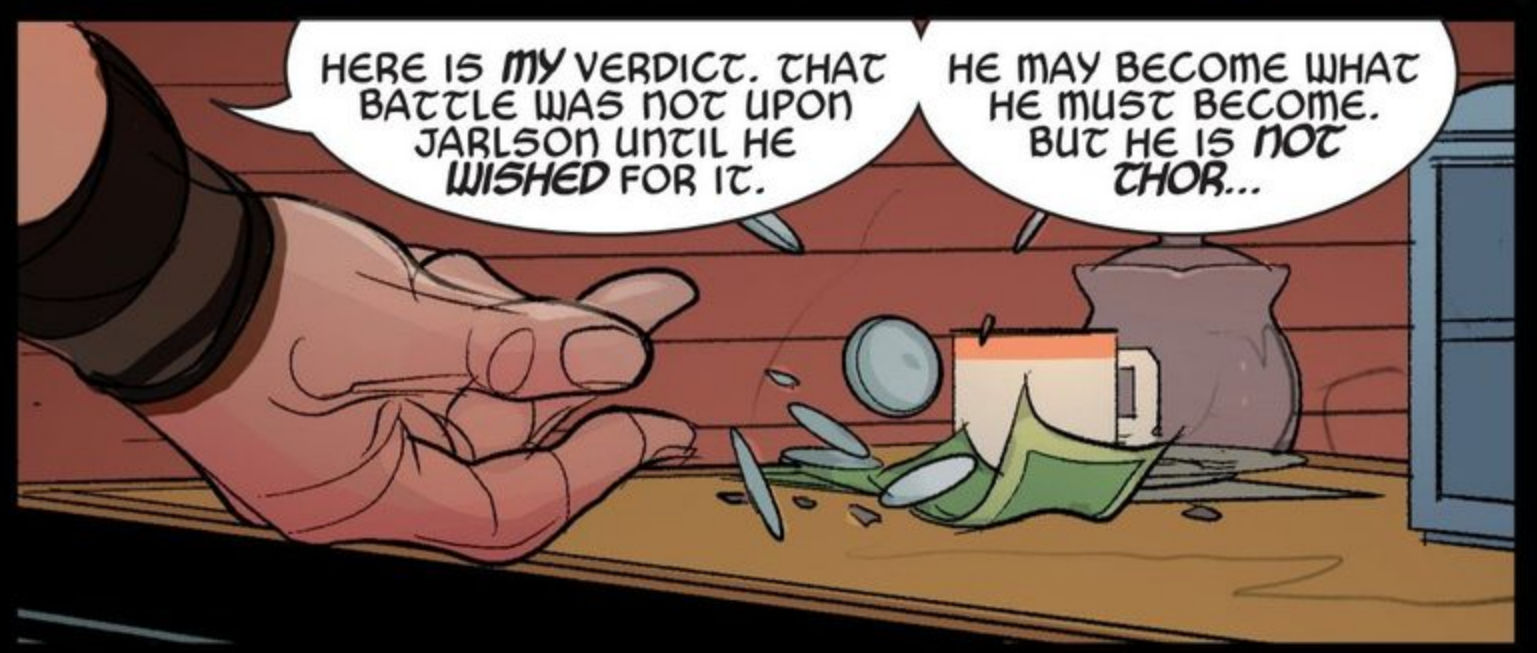
THAT IS **NOT** WHAT MY SON WOULD HAVE **WISHED**.



I DOUBT THOR WOULD WISH FOR SIGURD'S FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS TO BE **MURDERED**...

AYE. IF AN INNOCENT IS THREATENED, THAT IS A CAUSE TO **BATTLE**.

BUT **CHEAP TALK**? THE **WORDS** OF FOOLS IN THEIR **CUPS**?



HERE IS **MY** VERDICT. THAT BATTLE WAS NOT UPON JARLSON UNTIL HE **WISHED** FOR IT.

HE MAY BECOME WHAT HE MUST BECOME. BUT HE IS **NOT** THOR...



...FOR HE HAS NOT LEARNED **HUMILITY**.

MEND YOUR BROKEN TRICK, LOKI. I WILL BE **WATCHING**--AND IF I MUST **INTERVENE**...

"...I WILL NOT
TURN AWAY."

YOU KNOW
WHAT THE "DUTY
TO RETREAT" IS,
MR. JARLSON?

IT'S A LEGAL
PRINCIPLE THAT
OPERATES IN NEW YORK
STATE. OTHER STATES
HAVE "STAND YOUR
GROUND"--WE
HAVE THIS.

YOU ARE NOT ENTITLED TO
USE **DEADLY FORCE** ON
SOMEONE WHO WANTS
TO USE IT ON
YOU...

...IF YOU CAN
SAFELY RETREAT
FROM THE
SITUATION.

BIG "IF"
IN YOUR CASE,
RIGHT?

HARD TO RUN AWAY WHEN
YOU'RE ON A **GIRDER**
THREE HUNDRED FEET
IN THE AIR.

PLUS WE HAD A LOOK AT THE
GUNS THOSE SNAKE-PEOPLE
CARRIED--THEY FIRE TWO
TYPES OF AMMO. TYPE
ONE IS A **SLEEP**
DRUG.

ALL THE
FOLKS THE SNAKE
GUYS HIT WITH
THAT? THEY'LL
BE FINE.

EVEN THE ONES UP ON THE
GIRDER WITH YOU. THEIR
HARNESSES CAUGHT
'EM--JUST A FEW
BRUISES.

BUT AMMO
TYPE TWO, YOU
DON'T WAKE UP FROM.
SO THAT'S THE
"**DEADLY FORCE**"
COVERED.

YOU OR
THEM. YOU
DID WHAT YOU
HAD TO.

THAT'S
YOUR STORY,
AIN'T IT?



IS MY
LAWYER HERE
YET?



HE AIN'T
MADE IT. BUT YOU
DON'T WANT A
LAWYER, PAL. NOT
FOR THIS.

YOU BRING
SOME **LAWYER** IN,
IT MAKES IT HARDER
FOR US TO
HELP YOU--

DON'T KNOW
WHY YOU'D WANT
TO HELP THIS
TRASH, LOWE.



PRETTY
CLEAR HE WAS
IN ON IT--

HEY, C'MON.
C'MON. WE DON'T
KNOW THAT.

LET HIM TELL
HIS SIDE OF THE
STORY, HUH? LET
HIM CLEAR IT UP
FOR US...



...NO?
THE **SILENT**
ACT?

YOU DON'T
WANNA HELP ME
HELP YOU?



OKAY,
OKAY.

I'LL
BE RIGHT
BACK.

JUST YOU
AND ME FOR
A WHILE.

A LUMP
HAMMER. THAT'S
UNUSUAL FOR A
MAN IN YOUR
PROFESSION.

IRONWORKERS USE
SLEDGEHAMMERS.
THE HANDLES ARE A
LITTLE SHORTER,
BUT ONLY A
LITTLE.

AND THAT
CLIPPING IT ONTO
A WRIST CUFF, WITH
A LENGTH OF BUNGEE
ROPE... I'VE NEVER
SEEN THAT.

YOU DON'T
SEE IT MUCH AS A
MURDER WEAPON
EITHER.

OR
EVEN ATTEMPTED
MURDER.

FUNNY THING--THERE WAS A HAMMER
ATTACK OVER IN LONG ISLAND
CITY NOT LONG AGO.

COUPLE OF
BIKERS GOT THEIR
SKULLS CRACKED IN
AN ALLEY. I'D CALL
THAT ATTEMPTED
MURDER.

A BUNCH OF THOSE SAME BIKERS
GOT ATTACKED UPSTATE,
THE NEXT NIGHT. ONE GUY
LEFT TO TELL THE TALE,
LIKE ISHMAEL.

THE
ATTACKER HID
HIS FACE...

...BUT NOT
HIS HAIR. OR
HIS BUILD.

OR HIS
ACCENT.





NEVER IN ALL MY YEARS HAVE I SEEN SUCH **DESPERATION** IN THE INTERROGATION ROOM.

WHAT'S NEXT? THE OLD "THE PHOTOCOPIER IS A LIE DETECTOR" DODGE?

SHOW HIM THE FORM WAIVING HIS RIGHT TO **LEGAL COUNSEL** AND ASK FOR AN **AUTOGRAPH...**?



WHO...?

KENNETH KRASK. I'M YOUR **LAWYER.**

AND THAT "WHO" IS THE **LAST WORD** OUT OF YOUR MOUTH IN THIS ROOM.

KRISTIN SENT YOU?



WHAT DID I JUST SAY?

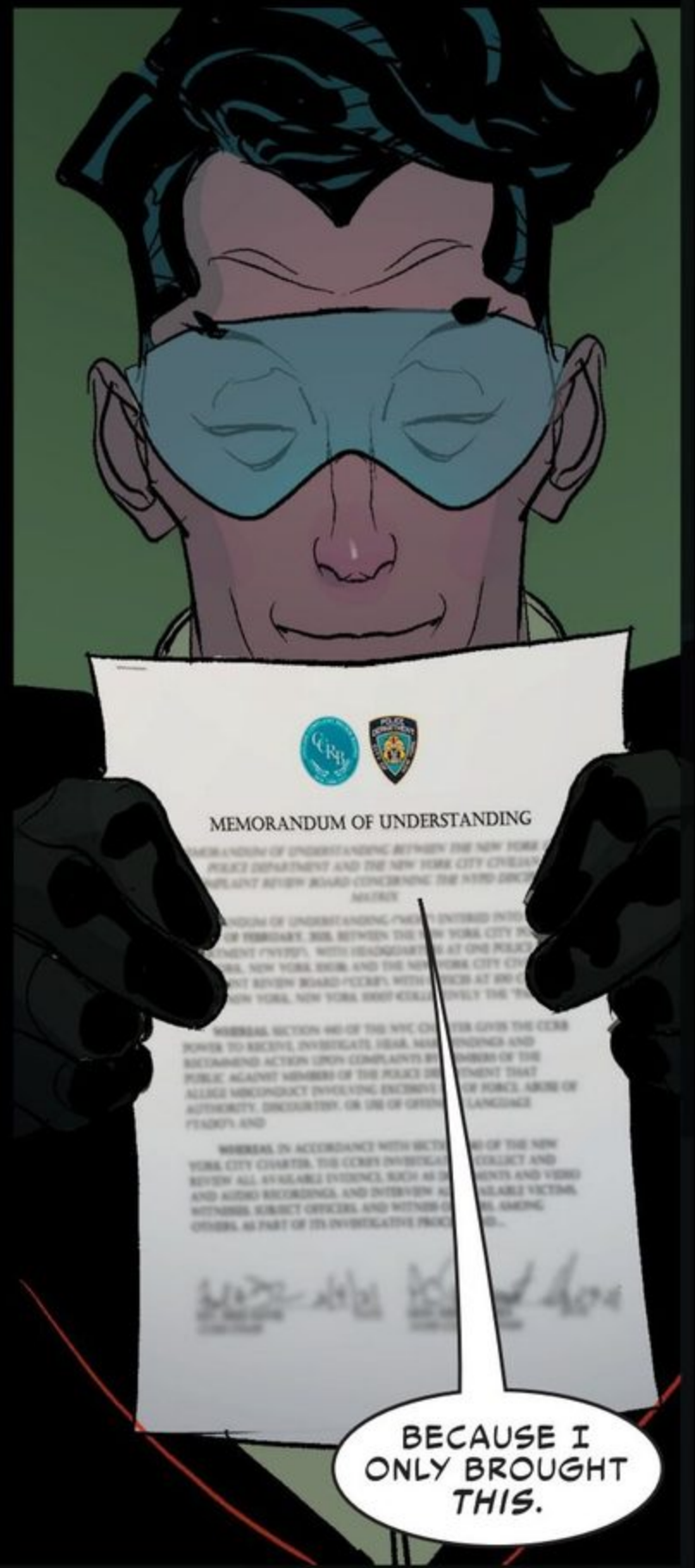
HEY, KENNY.

GREAT TO SEE YOU AGAIN, PAL, BUT IF YOU'RE GONNA REPRESENT **THIS GUY,** YOU SHOULD PULL UP A **CHAIR.**



WE GOT A LOT OF EVIDENCE TO GET THROUGH HERE--

REALLY? YOU DO?



MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE NEW YORK CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT AND THE NEW YORK CITY CIVILIAN COMPLAINT BOARD CONCERNING THE WORD "DODGE".

BECAUSE I ONLY BROUGHT THIS.



READ.

WHAT...?

LEMME
SEE THAT--



IS THAT THE
COMMISSIONER'S
SIGNATURE...?

IF YOU WANT
TO **VERIFY** THAT,
BE MY GUEST. THE
COMMISSIONER ISN'T
IN THE BEST MOOD
RIGHT NOW,
THOUGH.

NEEDLESS
TO SAY, MY
CLIENT IS A
VERY IMPORTANT
MAN.

AND UNLESS
YOU CAN CHARGE
HIM WITH **MURDER--**



--AS OPPOSED TO,
SAY, BEING PRESENT WHILE
HIS WOULD-BE KILLERS **LOST**
THEIR BALANCE, WHICH
IS ALL YOU CAN
CURRENTLY PROVE--

--WE'RE
DONE FOR
THE DAY.



OH--AND
HE'LL WANT
HIS **PROPERTY**
BACK.

ARE
YOU **KIDDING**
ME...?



YOU READ
WHAT THE
COMMISSIONER'S
OFFICE **WROTE**,
ARTIE.

LIKE
THE MAN
SAID, WE'RE
DONE...



...FOR
THE DAY.

DON'T
LEAVE TOWN,
JARLSON.

I WANT
TO SPEAK
TO YOU
AGAIN.



I...I SHOULD THANK YOU...

NO, MISTER JARLSON.

YOU REALLY SHOULDN'T.

SIG?
YOU'RE OKAY? I THOUGHT...



KRISTIN!
IT IS GOOD TO SEE YOU! AND THANK YOU!

THIS LAWYER YOU FOUND, HE IS VERY GOOD--

SIG...THIS IS THE LAWYER I FOUND. HE'S MY--



--I MEAN, HE'S AN OLD FRIEND...

MIKE HYUN. I'M, UH, MORE OF A COPYRIGHT LAWYER, REALLY.

GOOD THING I WAS HERE, THEN.



BUT I'M AFRAID MY CLIENT AND I HAVE PLACES TO BE, SO...

WAIT, HOLD ON-- YOU CAN'T JUST--

I...I THINK IT IS BETTER I GO WITH HIM, KRISTIN. FOR NOW.



...
IT'S KRIS.



I DO NOT UNDERSTAND.

IF YOU ARE NOT THE LAWYER WHO KRISTIN KNOWS-- WHOSE LAWYER ARE YOU? WHY ARE YOU HERE?

EXCELLENT QUESTIONS, MR. JARLSON. THERE'S A REAL INTELLIGENCE UNDER ALL THAT HAIR, ISN'T THERE?

LET'S JUST SAY I WAS ENGAGED BY SOMEONE WHO DIDN'T WANT YOU SAFELY AWAITING A TRIAL.



AN ENTITY WHOSE INTERESTS YOU HAVE ALIGNED YOURSELF AGAINST...

ENTITY? MY AMERICAN IS NOT GOOD.

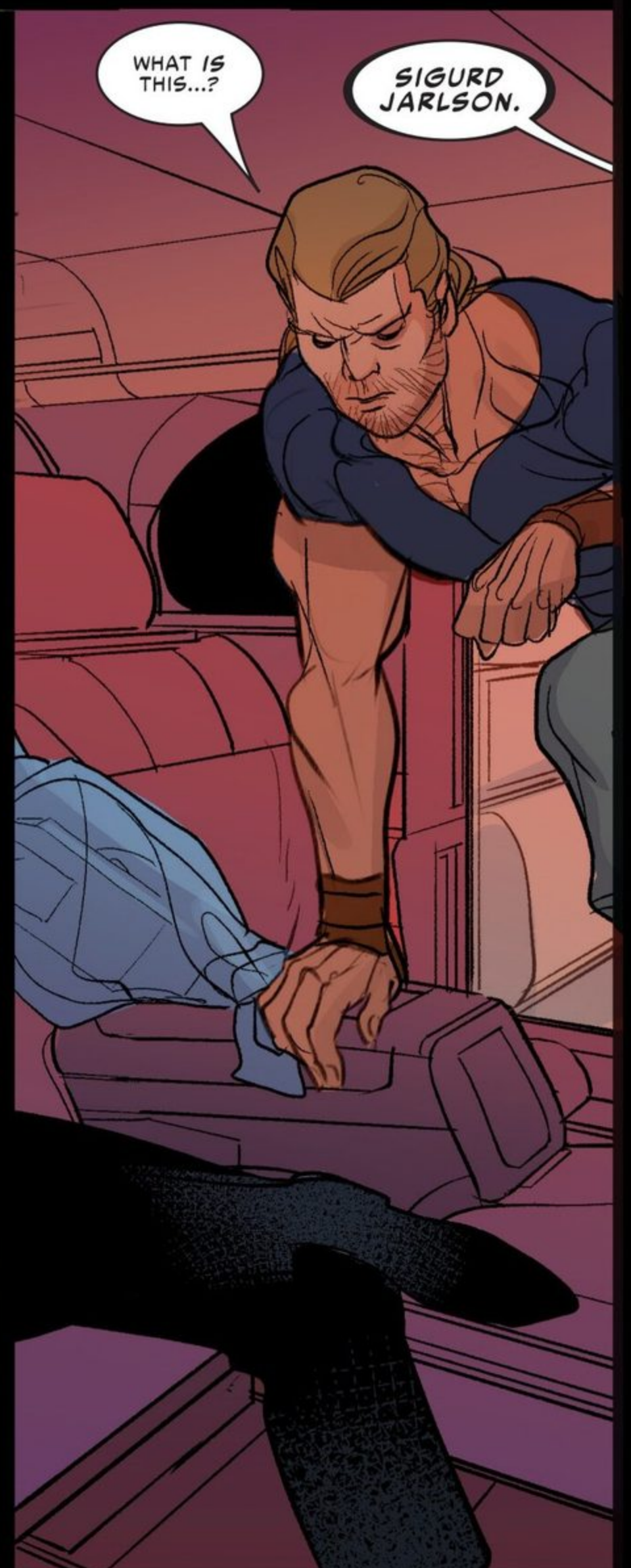
WHAT DOES THAT WORD MEAN...?



IN THIS CONTEXT? MANY THINGS.

AS I SAID... YOU REALLY SHOULDN'T THANK ME.

THE LIMO'S FOR YOU. GET IN.



WHAT IS THIS...?

SIGURD JARLSON.



I'M SO
VERY GLAD
YOU'RE NOT
DEAD.

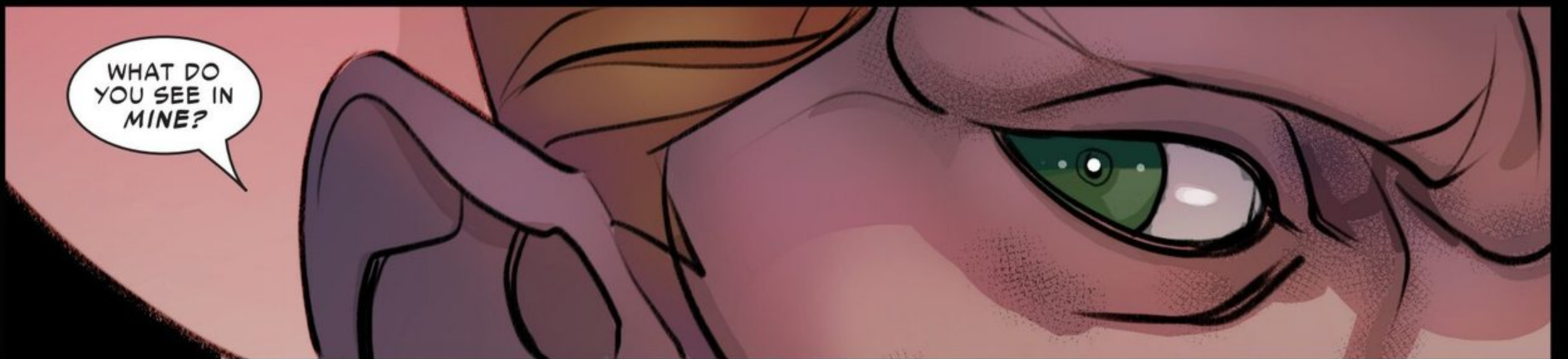
...

I'LL
SEE MYSELF
OUT.



I WANTED
A CHANCE TO
LOOK YOU IN
THE *EYE*.

THEY ARE,
AFTER ALL, THE
WINDOWS TO
THE *SOUL*...



WHAT DO
YOU SEE IN
MINE?



TOMHET.



HA!
PERCEPTIVE
MAN!

I HAD TO *TEST*
YOU, YOU UNDERSTAND. IF
THOSE IDIOTS *HAD* KILLED
YOU...YOU WOULDN'T BE
WHO I *THINK*
YOU ARE.

YOUR NAME
WOULD ONLY
BE AN *ECHO*. A
SYNCHRONICITY. THE
UNIVERSE'S *RHYME*,
ETCHED ON A
TOMBSTONE...



AND YOU'RE
MORE THAN
THAT, AREN'T
YOU?

YOU'RE
SPECIAL.

NO.

NO.



I AM *NOBODY*
IMPORTANT. *NOBODY*
SPECIAL!

I AM
JUST A MAN,
DO YOU
HEAR ME?

*JUST A
MAN!*



JUST A MAN WITH
A *HAMMER*,
HMM?

YOU ONLY HAVE WHAT
EVERYONE HAS--
EVERYONE BUT ME.
AND THAT'S THE
TRICK, ISN'T IT?

BECAUSE IF...
IF YOU CAN GET
THERE...FROM
HERE...



WHO ARE YOU...?

MY NAME IS **BLAKE**. JUST **BLAKE**.

I **FORGET** EXACTLY WHEN I STOPPED BEING **DONALD**.



WAS IT WHEN I TOOK VENGEANCE ON THE **GOLDEN REALM**? OR WHEN I WAS CHAINED DEEP IN THE **DARK**, AND THE **VENOM** ATE MY EYES?

WHEN I SET MYSELF FREE AND CAME **HERE**, LONG **BEFORE** THE **BRIDGE** TO THIS WORLD **BROKE ASUNDER**?

WHEN I LOST THE ONE THING I HAD LEFT...?

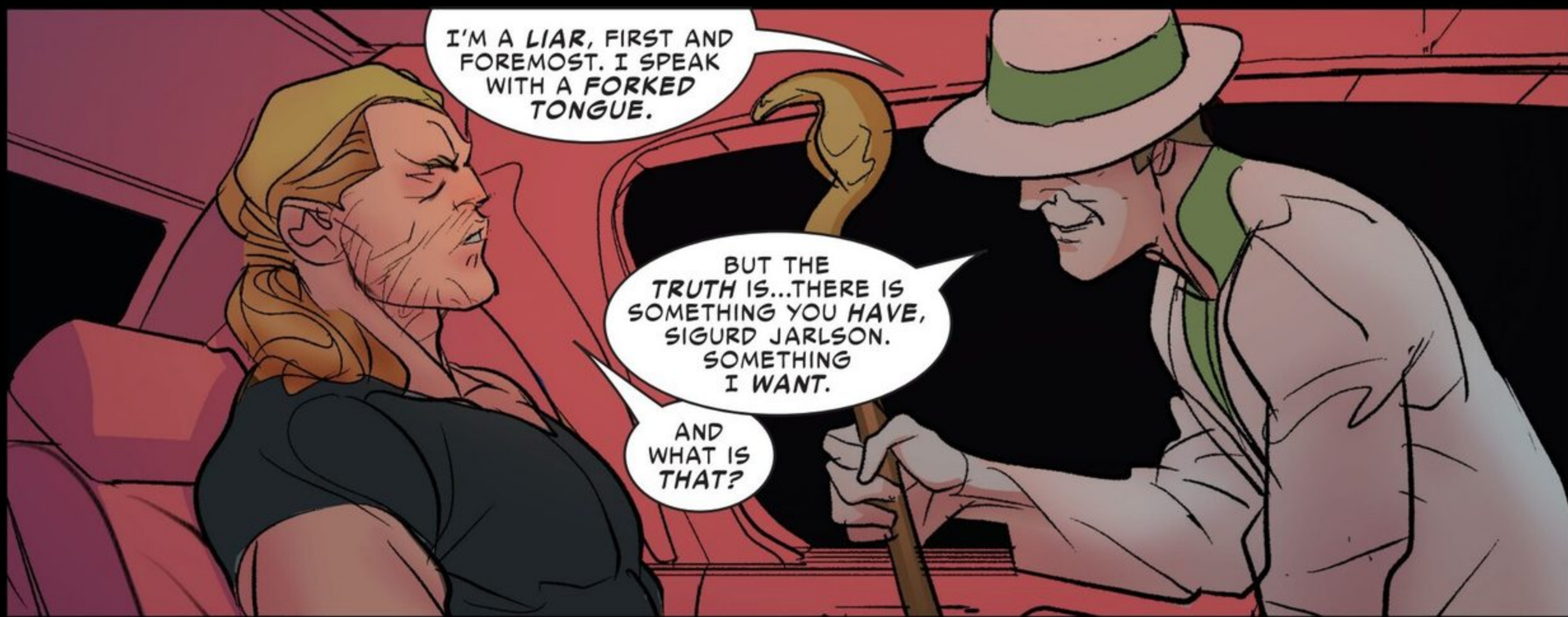


I--I DO NOT UNDERSTAND.

YOU ARE PLAYING A **TRICK**...?

HA HA! NO, NO.

THAT'S YOUR OTHER SIBLING.



I'M A **LIAR**, FIRST AND FOREMOST. I SPEAK WITH A **FORKED TONGUE**.

BUT THE **TRUTH** IS...THERE IS SOMETHING YOU HAVE, **SIGURD JARLSON**. SOMETHING I WANT.

AND WHAT IS THAT?



AN APARTMENT I WILL SOON LOSE? A **MATTRESS**, A **TV SET**, A **HOT PLATE** THAT IS **BROKEN**? SOME **CLOTHES**?

A **HAMMER** I BOUGHT FROM A **THRIFT STORE**?

NO. NO, NOTHING **PHYSICAL**.

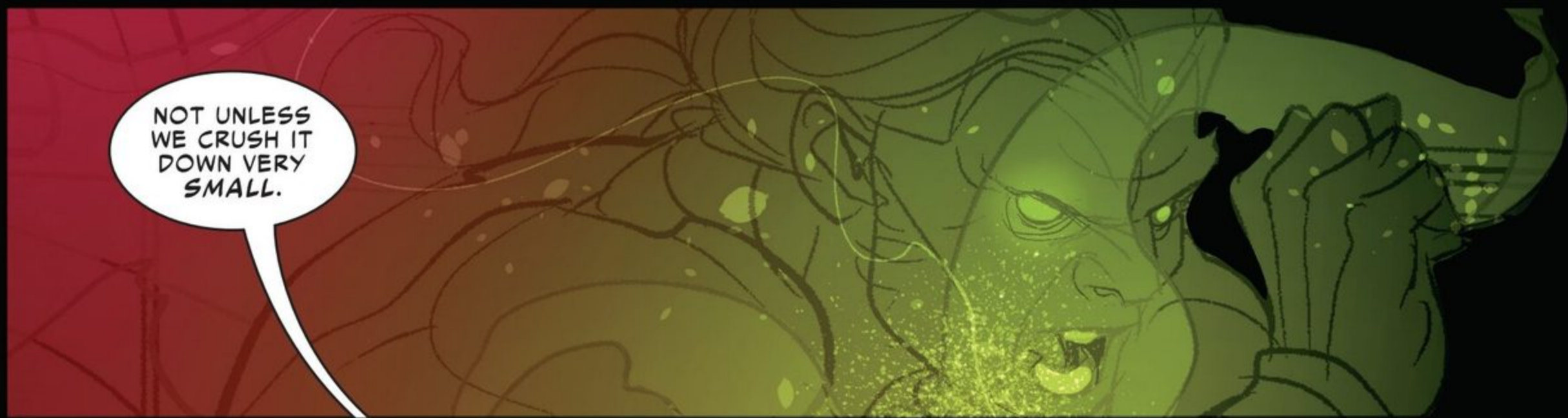


SOMETHING
MUCH MORE
PRECIOUS.



≠K-KAFF≠
WHAT--?

BUT I DON'T
BELIEVE IT'LL FIT
IN THIS CONTAINER
ANYMORE.



NOT UNLESS
WE CRUSH IT
DOWN VERY
SMALL.



I'M SO
VERY GLAD
YOU'RE NOT DEAD,
SIGURD...



THY SOUL TO TAKE

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NEXT ISSUE:



IN THE COILS OF THE COBRA!

- The man called Thor is only a man...the Cobra is something else. And he's not alone.
- Donald Blake has sent four of Roxxon's deadliest assassins after Sigurd Jarlson, and they won't stop until he quits...or he dies.
- Somewhere in the city, a man with a hammer has a choice to make...

**WE WANT YOUR LETTERS! TO SEE THEM ANSWERED BY AL EWING HIMSELF,
WRITE US AT MHEROES@MARVEL.COM, AND BE SURE TO MARK THEM "OKAY TO PRINT"!**